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TELEGRAM

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File

FROM	CLASSIFICATION
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES	CONFIDENTIAL

E.O. 11652:
TAGS:
SUBJECT: GDS
SHUM, AR
TIMERMAN'S RELEASE - MORE POSITIVE SIGNALS

(3) 50

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL BUENOS AIRES 2377

AMB
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REF: BUENOS AIRES 2225

1. Following Ambassador Castro's meeting with Army Chief of Staff Gen. Viola in which the latter promised there would be forward movement in the Timerman case, the Ambassador met with Mrs. Timerman on Thursday, March 30. The wife of the imprisoned editor of LA OPINION related that the family had received a number of assurances that her husband would shortly be transferred from prison to a modified form of detention, either house arrest or conditional liberty (e.g., his movements restricted to Buenos Aires). She stated that hopes were very high.

2. A senior Navy staff member informed Embassy PolOff Wednesday, March 29 that the Secretary Generals of the Argentine Armed Forces had agreed to a Navy proposal to transfer Jacobo Timerman to house arrest

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CONFIDENTIAL
CLASSIFICATION

50163-101

OPTIONAL FORM 153
(Formerly FS-413)
January 1975
Dept of State

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~~accept~~ "at the end of the month". The Navy has agreed to provide guards for the Timerman residence to insure his well-being.

3. Hector Timerman, the publisher's son, also met with Embassy PolOff on March 29. The young Timerman said that the family had been assured by a senior naval officer over the weekend that his father's release from prison was imminent.

4. The Timerman proceedings of the National Council for patrimonial responsibility (CONAREPA) are also moving towards a conclusion. Hector Timerman reported that the family's attorney was told by Army General Auditor Cuesta, the President of the CONAREPA, last week that the CONAREPA has given the state prosecutor ~~xxxx~~ until the end of March to finish his examination of the legality of the acquisition of Timerman's assets and possessions. General Cuesta said that if the government prosecutor is unable to raise any questions regarding the legality of Timerman's possessions that CONAREPA will lift the freeze on Timerman's possessions.

5. Hector Timerman reiterated that his father's only major possession is 45% of the LA OPINION newspaper and publishing plant. David Graiver's widow owns the other 45% of the shares, but these assets are blocked by the government. The newspaper's former General Manager Mr. Rothenburg controls the other 10%, which he was given by Graiver and Timerman. Rothenburg now lives in Spain.

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Jacobo Timerman [redacted] refused an early offer of Graiver's widow to sell the outstanding shares of LA OPINION as he did not have sufficient capital for the purchase. Hector Timerman added that his father and Rothenburg had controlling interest of the newspaper and saw no need to raise the large amount of capital to purchase the outstanding 45%. Mrs. Timerman informed the Ambassador that a proposal to increase the number of LA OPINION shares had never been acted on. She said that the newspaper was prosperous when it was taken over, but that the family had no expectation or interest in compensation. Their only interest was Mr. Timerman's freedom.

6. EMBASSY COMMENT: The strength and multiplicity of the signals both we and the Timerman family have been receiving lead us to be optimistic that Timerman will be transferred to house arrest within a relatively short timeframe.

CASTRO

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